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Minutes
Executive Committee of the Arts and Sciences Faculty
November 8, 2007

Members present: Lewis Duncan, Laurie Joyner, Paul Harris, Roger Casey, Don Davison, Barry Levis, Susan Libby, Rick Vitray, Drew Horsburg, Sharon Carnahan

- I. Don Davison called the meeting to order at 12:35 PM.
- II. Executive Committee Minutes from October 9 were approved with minor changes.
- III. New Business

Classical studies – Davison reviewed the excerpted minutes of the faculty meetings and the executive committee meetings from last year regarding the issue of hiring into programs. The issue was tabled indefinitely at the December 6, 2006 faculty meeting. Joyner commented that she was brought to the issue with a question as to how to evaluate a faculty member for tenure when hired into a program versus hired into a department. This led to a question as to whether we can hire a tenure track candidate into a program. Davison referred two governance issues to the Professional Standards Committee: (1) whether we can hire a tenure track candidate into a program and (2) how is evaluation handled for such a candidate. Libby reported that PSC concurred with last years committee that the intent of the By-laws was not to permit hiring into programs. Although the wording was too ambiguous to apply retroactively, PSC recommended that the By-laws should be clarified to avoid this situation in the future. The issue of considering the request to create a department of classics was referred to Academic Affairs. AAC decided their question was moot until PSC had ruled. Harris asked if there is anything specific in the By-laws that forbids hiring a tenure-track candidate into a program. Libby affirmed there is nothing specific and the By-law do mention programs, but the section on evaluation is based on a departmental structure. Joyner commented that part of the ambiguity stems from By-law changes made between 2000 and 2002. Davison commented that the conclusion of the Executive Committee last year was that a By-law was needed to hire into programs which also implies that it cannot be done. Duncan commented the By-laws should not block the discussion of the educational question of whether and to what extent we are going to have interdisciplinary programs. Davison expressed displeasure that despite the rulings from last year the school apparently hired a professor into the classical studies program. Casey responded that the willingness of the department of theater to house the candidate was included as part of the

request. Casey agreed that an error in judgment may have occurred. He noted that one of the two members already in the program was housed in Art History and the other was housed in Philosophy and Religion so housing a candidate whose area was classical theater seemed appropriate. Joyner commented that the candidate is not qualified to teach any of our current courses in the Theater department; so that the Theater Department is not suitable for evaluating the candidate. This is now a personnel problem that must be dealt with by AAC and her. Casey believes that the question of hiring into programs is moot. The only issue for AAC is whether they support the request to create a classics department. He noted that contradictory requests have come from program representatives at different times. Casey commented that the change in the F requiring the creation of a new position can be found in the faculty meeting minutes when that change was approved. AAC is directed to consider the request to create a department of classics.

Budget and Compensation – Davison opined that the role of the Executive Committee is to frame a choice for the faculty, to establish a forum for them to discuss the issue and express their will as to what to do next. This led to the decision to propose a resolution. Davison suggested giving the faculty a clear choice of creating a task force to develop a merit system based on specified guidelines. Proposing a clear choice can provide good information regarding the issue. The system arrived at by the task force could then be rejected if it was not acceptable to the faculty. Joyner identified two issues that she felt might be the source of faculty resistance: lack of confidence that there will be a meaningful pool and concern that the system is not punitive. Harris responded that there is also a cultural issue. He opined that whatever evaluation system we have is going to be flawed. Joyner noted that our current system also has flaws. Some chairs have commented to her of problems with people in their departments not pulling their weight. Levis stated that while there is not a merit system there is a demerit system. Casey responded that the demerit system was a one time occurrence that affected at most two people. The regression line presented at the last faculty meeting is evidence of the lack of a such a system. Duncan is preparing a draft memo regarding an executive session of the board. He noted that the trustees do have significant funds they can bring to the table, but they have not yet committed to that. The board feels pressure to reduce tuition increases not to increase faculty salaries as they see continuing 5% tuition increase as not being a sustainable business model. They are interested in raising faculty salaries to above the national median. Median salaries, however, mean that half get less and half get more. The board strongly supports the idea that merit should influence salaries. They are concerned that we are unable to hire into some of our most popular programs. Furthermore, we are already on a *de facto* merit system based on years of service which has a built-in bias. He finds the argument that a merit system would contribute to low faculty moral embarrassing. Joyner asked why a merit system is not a good thing given the board's commitment to across-the-board cost of living increasing. Harris felt we should investigate what our peers are doing. Casey

commented that he has seen excellent systems at other institutions. He suggested that Furman has a worth while system that we should consider. He commented that in 2000, when significant funds were brought to the table, the argument was given that we did not have time to develop a merit system. Since then, we have created a back door system of the Cornell money. This system, however, is flawed. He advocates creating a system that will recognize good work. Joyner commented that there are creative ways to balance the criteria. Carnahan commented that administrators who have been faculty and have experience at other institutions are in favor of a merit system; so that it would be better for the faculty to take control of the issue. Duncan did not understand why a faculty designed, faculty run, merit system would lower moral. Carnahan noted that such a system must reward those efforts that we have historically valued. Casey commented that the Cornell scholarship award is a good example of how this evaluation can be done. Levis responded that putting together materials for that award was for him quite demanding. Harris commented that it would be a good idea to look at what is in place at other institutions and let that lead our decision process. The committee voted on what to propose to the faculty. Three members voted in favor of a resolution to create a task force that studies the pros and cons of merit systems in schools similar to Rollins and report its results to the faculty in January and three member voted in favor of a resolution to create a task force that develops a merit system and report its results to the faculty in January. Consensus was reached to bring both resolutions to the faculty

IV. The meeting was adjourned at 1:53 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Richard Vitray
Acting Secretary